

---

---

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**

**NEWS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

---

---

NATIONAL  
OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC  
ADMINISTRATION

CONTACT: Patricia Viets, NOAA  
(301) 457-5005

NOAA 01-R309  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
September 28, 2001

**NOAA's NATIONAL CLIMATIC DATA CENTER  
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SERVICE**

The National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), the world's largest active archive of weather data, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on October 5, 2001. Located in Asheville, N.C., the center provides valuable climate information and is an integral part of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

NCDC annually processes millions of requests for climate data, which is used extensively in areas that affect our daily lives. This information is applied in the design and construction of buildings, bridges, roads and dams; heating and air conditioning systems; transportation systems; and remote sensing systems.

Data provided by the center have been used as a key component in the design of a new municipal airport facility in Texas and a high speed rail between Orlando International Airport and Walt Disney World. The Federal Aviation Administration also utilized NCDC data during the development of new instrument landing systems for 55 major U.S. airports.

As NOAA's primary data storehouse, NCDC archives nearly 98 percent of all NOAA environmental data. In a typical month the center's web access systems logs approximately 300,000 users who download more than 7 million data files. The center's historical archives contain one petabyte of digital data, which if stored on CD-ROM and stacked horizontally would be equivalent to 44 football fields long. NCDC also archives more than 1.2 million microfiche and 200 million paper records. Paper and manuscript records date back to the early 1700s and are useful to researchers trying to reconstruct the climate record.

Tracing its roots as part of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy Weather Records Center, NCDC was established as the National Weather Records Center in 1951. The center is now part of NOAA's National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS), the nation's primary source of space-based meteorological and climate data. NESDIS operates the nation's environmental satellites, which are used for weather forecasting, climate monitoring and other environmental applications such as fire detection, ozone monitoring and sea surface temperature measurements. Including NCDC, NESDIS operates three data centers, which house global data bases in climatology, oceanography, solid earth geophysics, marine geology and geophysics, solar-terrestrial physics, and paleoclimatology.

To learn more about NESDIS, please visit <http://www.nesdis.noaa.gov>  
For additional information about NCDC, please see: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov>

Contact Tom Ross at (828) 271-4499 or by e-mail: [tom.ross@noaa.gov](mailto:tom.ross@noaa.gov) for more information on NCDC anniversary activities planned during the week of October 1-5, 2001.